

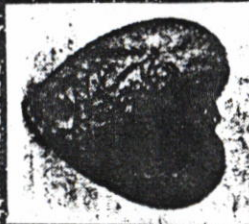
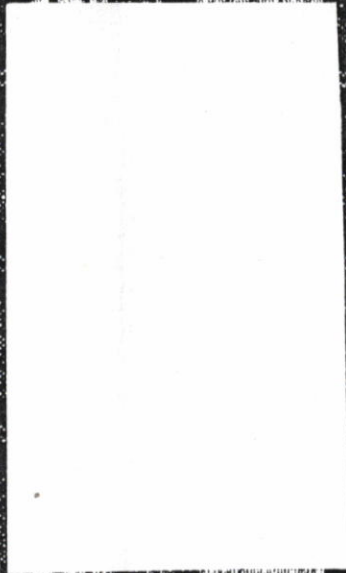
Brendan
POB 1804
NYC 10009

Near Miss

No. 3

A Shotgun Loaded With Love

Sept. '94



Hi Ed,

Well here's my latest New Miss
and my first try at editing MA.
Please let me know what you
think. Thanks again for all
your help.

As for the AGEA pamphlet, did
you receive my suggestions?

-Brendan

SOLIDARITY CENTER
1119 MASSACHUSETTS
LAWRENCE, KS 66044
785-865-1374

Tales of a Greasy-Spoon is a book of entertaining stories by French expatriate Bruno Gheerbrant. My favorites are "A Rooster Among Dykes" and "The Rosa Parks Thing I Hadn't Heard Of." It looks expensive to print, so better send cash to POB 426935, San Francisco, CA 94142-6935.

Notes From The Lighthouse Joshua writes about hitchhiking, living in a cabin behind a friend's house, and a 24-hour garage sale. It's good. Send \$1.25 or fun stuff to POB 165, Eureka, CA 95502.

Pathetic Life In this autobiographical zine, Doug writes very entertainingly about the sometimes mundane, often rather grody details of his life. If he has a pathetic life, he sure seems to be enjoying it. 24 Ellis St. #141, San Francisco, CA 94102.

Dwelling Portably is a great source for information and discussion about living cheap and simple, mostly in rural or wilderness situations. Trade 'em information about your own portable dwelling experiences or send a dollar to POB 190, Philomath, OR 97370.



Well my friends, the time has come for Near Miss #3. Like the first two issues, this one is happening at sort of a turning point in my life. To give everyone who's interested a brief update on my life: in May I moved out of Ganas and into an apartment on the Lower East Side. I was living with Diana and a couple roommates. That was a summer sublet, and now Diana and I are living in her studio in Hell's Kitchen. I had a happy, though not very productive summer. Now the fall is bringing lots of activities. I'm working for the NY Public Library, taking classes at Hunter College, working on a collectively-run info-shop project, and editing this zine and another zine. More on all this stuff later.

Now for the basic zine info. This is Near Miss #3, printed in September 1994. You can receive a copy of this zine by sending me a zine of your own, a piece of artwork or writing for NM, or a friendly letter. Plus if I like you I'll give it to you no matter what you do. At heart this is an autobiographical zine, but I am happy to print things by other people if they fit in well. I look for things from a personal perspective. Everything by me in here is anticopyright; reprint at will. Other people may want you to ask before you reprint their stuff. I have copies of the first two issues if anyone wants 'em. Please send all zine correspondence to:

Brendan POB 1804 NYC 10009

Thanks for reading!



Diana

Even though she requested not to be mentioned, I can't print a zine that's supposedly about my life and thoughts and such without talking about the most important person in my life.

Diana and I met in the Greyhound bus station in St. Louis in the summer of 1993. We sat together on the bus from St. Louis to Indianapolis; it was five hours and we talked the whole way. Maybe it wasn't love at first sight, but it was something; by the time the bus rolled into Indianapolis, we were holding hands. After that trip, we wrote to each other and talked on the phone a lot. She was living in Washington D.C. and I had just moved to New York. We spent a few weekends together, and then jumped to her moving up to NYC and us living together.

We've spent the whole summer together, seeing each other every day, and it's been wonderful. I'm in love. Diana's a creative dreamer, a cosmic anarchist, and an angel. She's very much in touch with love, beauty, and the spiritual world. She's beautiful herself, and she's fun. She likes adventure, risk, and wild sex. She's also a caring, giving person who, like me, has faith in the human spirit. We have similar goals for the future, and I hope we're together in the future to carry them out.

Diana and I are building trust in our relationship, so maybe this public declaration will create some confidence. I love you, Diana.



Zine Reviews

The Trouble With Andre is a charming little book of stories and pictures from Cara. Her favorite letter is D, and she dreams of someday being a British guy named Nigel. Send her a nice letter at 6943 N. Ridge, Chicago, IL 60645.

Budzine Bud's another person who, like me, is mysteriously driven to document his life and make it available to others. He tells us of a disappointing trip to the circus, and paying his taxes. Send Bud a dollar or a zine in trade at 3201 E 24 St., Tucson, AZ 85713-2204.

The Firefly is a sweetheart zine with an edge. It combines radical political pieces exposing our government's terrorism with fun kids' drawings and family-type stories. Write to them at Box 133, Angle Inlet, MN 56711.

Scam has a great review section, in which Mark reviews the disease/affliction asthma, the loquat tree and fruit, and Boone's Wine. My issue included a free postcard. Send a photo of your mom or something else to 5101 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006.

Gogglebox Jenn creates one of the finest zines in zineland (but she hasn't written to me lately, grr). If you love roadtrip stories as much as I do, and appreciate good writin' on other topics too, get in touch with Jenn G. Box, POB 250402, Columbia Stn. NYC 10025-1536.

First Person prints stories from various folks on a certain theme. Issue #1 is Body Parts, and has gruesome tales with titles like "The Bloody Stump." Submit or send \$2.00 to Tracey West, POB 416, Sparkill, NY 10976.

A Home Need Not Be A House

by Julie Summers

An establishment think-tank would have had difficulty coining a more misleading label than "homeless." But I doubt that was the source. More likely, some reporter happened to use it, and it caught on, because it provides:

- * a scapegoat for law enforcers to blame crime on;
- * a scapegoat for public health agencies to blame disease on;
- * an excuse to hire more bureaucrats to administer the "homeless problem";
- * a red herring to cover up the real problem, which is high costs of housing, due largely to government regulations;
- * a term to disparage unconventional dwellingways. (In a mild climate, a cardboard shack or even a sleeping bag may provide adequate shelter and be a comfortable home. To say the occupants are "homeless" is a put-down and a lie, created to help justify evicting them.)

Who are the "homeless"? The term has been applied willy nilly to a wide variety of people who may have little more in common than unstylish appearance or behavior. Thus, I feel unstylish is a more truthful term.

Sometimes I live with little more for shelter than a sleeping bag. I resent being called "homeless": my camp is my home--and I don't feel deficient, as the less in homeless might imply.

"Take a lesson from the snail, which everywhere doth roam carrying its own house still, still it is at home: be thine own palace or the world's thy jail."

--Author?

Or, as I overheard a young woman say, "I have no home; but I'm at home wherever I am."

This is not to deny that there are people without comfortable shelters. However, respectors of self-determination will not pass pronouncements on others, but will leave it up to each individual to say whether he has a home.

My Trip to Albany

This summer I went up to Albany with my buddy Ed. I saw the Factsheet Five archives and did other fun stuff, and then rode my bicycle from Albany to New York, camping out along the way.

The first day or so in Albany, I met some of Ed's friends and saw some of Albany and Troy. Then Ed was driving back to NYC and I couldn't stay with his friend anymore, so after he dropped me off, I started looking for a place to crash. I considered sleeping indoors, but I couldn't find a hostel, and didn't want to shell out the cash for a motel room, so I ended up camping out. Albany has a big plaza downtown with all the museums and such, and I slept in a little park adjacent to that. I didn't even have to set up my tent, just curled up in my blanket on the grass. It was fun to camp out right under the noses of all the big state institutions.

The next day was my big day at the Factsheet Five archives. In case you live in a cave, F5 is a gigantic guide to amateur publications like this one. (send \$6 (worth it) to F5, POB 170099, San Francisco, CA 94117-0099) F5 was the first non-mainstream thing I was ever exposed to, living with my parents in suburban Florida. Mike Gunderloy was the editor then, and when he got burnt out a few years ago (after publishing F5 for a decade let us sing songs of praise), he donated all the zines he had kept, and assorted other F5 documents to the NY state library. That's what I went to see. It was a great experience. I got to see a bunch of early issues of F5 itself, and some old lost issues of my high school underground newspaper, and other neat old zines. Now that these zines are part of an archive, they are handled like the treasures they are. I was told, "Please do not lean on the documents," and, "Please use pencil for your notes. You may make a stray pen mark on a zine." That was

nice, and funny: I'm sure the editors themselves never handled their publications that carefully. One drawback is that you can't go look through the zines yourself; you have to have a librarian bring certain publications out to you. But I still heartily recommend the archives to ardent zine fans and small press historians.

I spent one more night in Albany and then headed back to the Big Apple--by bike. I must have been a hilarious sight. It had gotten unexpectedly cold in Albany, so I hit a thrift store for a goofy-looking but warm shirt and long pants (which I had to make a rope belt for); I had my tent and bedroll tied to my rear rack, along with plastic saddlebags. And of course it rained the first day, so add to that picture a giant poncho blob and more supermarket bags covering my gear. I may have looked goofy, but I had a great time. I spent two days and two nights on the road, and I would ride almost all day, stopping to check out the towns and the awesome views of the Hudson. Then at night I would just find a clearing near highway 9, spread out my blanket, and collapse. I saw some beautiful country and got really high on bike riding. My bike made it just fine; I finally got a flat tire at 145 St. in Manhattan, where I could just hop on the train, go home, and recover.

Meander Quarterly

I am now editor of Meander Quarterly, "newsletter of evolutionary anarchists." The editorship is supposed to rotate annually, so I volunteered for a year. I think evolutionary anarchism is a pretty good description of my political philosophy, and I wanted to get back in touch with radical politics. If anyone's interested in reading MQ, my first issue will be out November 1, and I have some back issues. Just write to me to get a copy, and include a small donation if you can afford it.

(I try to take care of, fix, and make things myself. To learn I read how-to books that experts have written--cheaper than buying their time on a one-to-one, face-to-face basis). Meat every day (once in a while is enough). Bacon 'n' eggs (I don't buy bacon because of additives and I use eggs only when I get a yen for them). Desserts (perhaps once a month; candy even less often). Expensive 10-speed (I push my second-hand 3-speed (or 1-speed) when the going gets steep). State-of-the-art knapsack (mine is a simple home-made).

If there is something you think you absolutely must have, consider that there are probably millions of people in the world who routinely get along without it.

Blackout Books

OPENING OCTOBER 15!

Well, I'm back in the radical bookstore "business." Blackout is a group of fun-lovin' anarchists who've been selling radical political publications at events and on the street for about a year. Diana and I got involved a couple of months ago, and at just the right time, as the project is exploding into action. We're opening a bookstore/info-shop on the Lower East Side in October. (For you New Yorkers: it's 50 Avenue B between 3 and 4 Streets) I'm very excited about the project; it's similar to what I dreamed of doing in Phoenix, but I didn't have the know-how, and Phoenix didn't have the support. But New York is full of people and organizations just waiting for something like this. And the project is run by a collective, so there is a lot of potential for the store to accomplish a lot and for many other projects to grow out of it. The group is great to work with, and the store is going to be a huge success. Come on out and see us!

Maintenance

For the toaster, blender, chain-saw, and electric toothbrush it's simple--since I don't have any. But I do have a bicycle, sewing machine and typewriter to contend with. I learned bike mechanics primarily through books and how to service my sewing machine by reading the owner's manual. I approach typewriter repair on a trial and error basis.

Health Care

Taking care of my own body is a more complex matter. My first line of defense is preventative medicine, but even so, sometimes I get sick or have an accident. Learning what to do when that happens, without recourse to exorbitantly priced doctors, has been difficult. Some books have helped: Where There Is No Doctor, David Werner, Hesperian Foundation, POB 1692, Palo Alto, CA 94302; Being Your Own Wilderness Doctor, Angier and Kodet; Medicine for Mountaineering; The Merck Manual; Wilderness Medicine; William Forgey.

Recreation

Because my way of living does minimal un-creating, re-creating isn't called for. Or putting it another way, my everyday activities are my recreation: making bread, walking in the woods to fetch water, picking berries, bicycling, making clothes, writing, reading.

I tried a daily 30-minute meditation period. Although free, it didn't do anything for me so I gave it up. I think the reason it was a flop is because I already meditate practically all the time. I'm constantly reflecting about what I experience. I think that's important if one wishes to live economically; otherwise it's easy to get caught up in someone else's expensive follies.

Unnecessities

Oven (I bake on top of my wood stove in a foil-covered pan). TV. Newspapers. Shampoo (I use bar soap for hair as well as body). Toothpaste (I use water and elbow grease--along with my brush. A little dental pumice every few months removes stains). Deodorant (washing suffices). Pajamas. Aspirin (and other palliative drugs). Supermarkets (of the myriad items, I purchase only meat, eggs, cheese, and produce--if there's no better place to buy them). Professionals

Goodbye to Consumerism

Over the years since I escaped from suburbia, I've been moving further and further away from consumerism and consumer culture, and it's a relief and a wonder to think of all the garbage I've left behind. Part of it is physical garbage: I've gotten rid of a huge amount of material possessions that were weighing me down; and another part is mental garbage: I really don't miss TV and all those movies at all, and it frees up time and brain space for actual living. It's amazing what insane creatures we Americans really are. We convince ourselves that we need all the unnecessary things we see advertised, and then we must throw away 40 hours a week of our lives to pay for it.

So I'm checking out of the machine as much as I can, by getting rid of my garbage, and by experimenting with alternative housing. When our sublet was up, Diana and I couldn't stand the idea of hitting the regular apartment market and giving away our money just to live. And, we didn't have any money, so we got creative. Diana's in the M.F.A. program at Hunter, and she gets a studio space, which is now our living space. It's not really allowed, but the authorities look the other way. It's presented some challenges, since there's no kitchen or shower (a hot plate and trips to the locker room at Hunter solve that), but it's free, and that means less of our time is wasted at some job making rent money.

Of course, I'm nowhere near the simple life that is my ideal, but I'm learning. I've gotten a lot of inspiration from Julie Summers, who wrote the articles that follow.

Julie also writes for Dwelling Portably (reviewed in the back). You can write to her at their address.

Escargot

On A Slug Budget

by Julie Summers

One way to get wealthy is to make lots of money. Another, often overlooked approach is to live abundantly on little. If you think Thoreau was able to do that at Walden but that it's out of the question in today's world, consider this: from 1977-1982 I averaged \$576 per year. And in 1992, though inflation has steadily pushed up prices, I've learned to be even more economical, thus I still spend less than \$600 a year. (I don't get food stamps or welfare either.) I live comfortably, not longing for anything more money could buy. (In fact I'd spend more if there were things available that I thought would make my life better.)

I live in beautiful, peaceful surroundings, without smog, noise, hustle or bustle. I eat well. My health is good. My time is mostly my own, since I need devote little of it to earning money.

I do not live as I do because of a religion. Nor am I an ascetic, fugitive, or primitivist. I live as I do because after trying various other ways (all more expensive and providing less leisure) I find my present situation gives me the most satisfaction. I'm not out to set a record for living on little money; it just happens that what I've found to be the most congenial is at the same time very economical.

Food

My diet is based on grains and pulses (the edible seeds of plants having pods--peas, beans, lentils, etc.) bought minimally processed, in bulk--often 50-100 pound sacks--from wholesalers: wheat, rice, millet, corn, beans, and lentils. Also alfalfa, sesame, and sunflower seeds; nuts; and dried fruit. Because of perishability I buy baking yeast and oil in smaller amounts (by the gallon) at natural food stores.

I try not to be attached to any particular food. When one shoots up in price, I cut down, substitute, or

simply do without. E.g., when raisins were extremely high I used dates, which were less expensive. When rice was many times the price of other grains I eliminated it. Cheese is so expensive that it's now in my luxury category and I buy it infrequently.

To increase the nutritional content of my fare I sprout alfalfa and other seeds. I also buy fresh fruits and vegetables that are currently low in price, such as carrots and oranges. I buy eggs when I crave them--I may go months without any. I use meat very irregularly, perhaps on the average of once a week.

I do some foraging; mostly for berries and greens, occasionally for a squirrel.

I seldom eat out. That must save a bundle. But it's not simply a question of money: the food most restaurants serve (often reheated, highly seasoned, and doused with chemicals) is not what I want to eat. Also I don't care for the waiter-patron relationship, and I don't like having to worry about my table manners.

From 1977-'82 I averaged about \$297 a year for food.

Shelter

My partner and I live in an old trailer. Admittedly small, it's still adequate since all we want to do is live in it, not use it as a status symbol. It keeps us dry, it's easy to heat, easy to clean, and everything is within easy reach. It's also mobile so we can change scenery without much trouble.

We usually live in sub-rural, woodsy areas, trading a few hours of work a month for camping privileges.

Clothes

I don't wear any--when I can get away with it. For nasty weather, armed berry bushes, and intolerant people, I cover up. Free-boxes, second hand outlets, or home industry provide most of my garments. They may not be highly fashionable but they serve the necessary functions.

Transportation

I don't have a car. I walk, ride a bike, hitch, or take the bus. (To move the trailer I borrow a vehicle.)